



Region 1
490 N. Meridian Road
Kalispell, MT 59901

**Environmental Assessment Decision Notice
for the Proposed Pine Grove Pond Fishing Access Site Acquisition**

November 3, 2010

Proposal

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks (FWP) proposes to accept the donation from the Robin Street family of 13 acres of land with improvements northeast of Kalispell, Montana, near the Whitefish River for the purpose of establishing a fishing access site (FAS). The improvements include a 5-acre pond, access and service roads, an entrance security gate, parking lot, vault latrine, and perimeter fencing. A cash contribution of \$20,000 from the Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust would be made to the landowner on behalf of FWP toward the property's donated value. The proposed Pine Grove Pond FAS is located approximately 300 feet from the Whitefish River and three miles northeast of Kalispell.

In 2007, Montana Department of Environmental Quality granted approval to property owner Robin Street for an open-cut mining operation for sand and gravel to remove up to 120,000 cubic yards of material to be used for highway construction. The pit was contoured to meet DEQ and FWP pond guidelines with the goal of creating a recreational fishing pond for children and families to be later managed for public use.

Montana Environmental Policy Act Process (MEPA) and Public Involvement

On September 27, 2010, FWP released a draft environmental assessment (EA) for the Pine Grove Pond Fishing Access Site Proposed Acquisition. The EA evaluated the potential impacts of the following alternatives:

Alternative A - No Action: If no action were taken, the landowner could retain or dispose of the property and the associated development, at his option, but FWP would lose the opportunity to accept the proposed land donation and to provide family fishing opportunities at this site.

Alternative B - Proposed Action: FWP would accept the donation of the 13-acre tract of land, which would include a 5-acre pond and associated improvements, in order to establish a fishing access site (FAS) and provide public access to the pond and associated land for family fishing, wildlife viewing, and picnicking.

This release was announced through local media outlets, the FWP web site, and through mailings to adjacent property owners and interested parties. The public was provided with 30 days to review and comment on this proposal.

Summary of Public Comment

Eight written comments and one telephone comment were received during the public comment period. The nine respondents to this proposal voiced support for Alternative B as the preferred alternative.

Revisions to the Draft Environmental Assessment

There were no potentially negative impacts raised during public comment period; therefore, there are no substantive changes to the draft EA, and the draft EA becomes the final EA.

Decision

Based on the environmental assessment and public comment, it is my decision to recommend to the FWP Commission that the department proceed with the proposed action, Alternative B, to accept the donation of the Pine Grove Pond for inclusion into the FAS program.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "David Landstrom", is displayed on a light yellow rectangular background.

David Landstrom
Regional Parks Manager, Region One

Date: November 3, 2010